

Appl. No. 10/033,860
Amdt. dated Nov. 25, 2003
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 29, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A nonwoven structure comprising superabsorbent and binder fibers and having a center and an outer surface wherein said structure has less than 5 times more oxidation at said outer surface than at said center.
2. (Original) The nonwoven structure of claim 1 wherein said structure has less than 3 times more oxidation at said outer surface than at said center.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently amended) The nonwoven structure of claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1 further comprising natural fibers.
5. (Original) The nonwoven structure of claim 1 which has been thermally bonded with electromagnetic radiation.
6. (Original) The nonwoven structure of claim 6 wherein said electromagnetic radiation is microwave radiation.
7. (Original) The nonwoven structure of claim 1 wherein said binder fiber has an energy receptive additive.
8. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said binder fiber has a dielectric loss of between 0.5 to 15.
9. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said binder fiber has a dielectric loss of between 1 to 15.
10. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said binder fiber has a dielectric loss of between 5 to 15.
11. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said energy receptive additive is selected from the group consisting of carbon black, magnetite, silicon carbide, calcium chloride.
12. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said energy receptive additive is present in an amount between 2 and 40 weight percent of said binder fiber.
13. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said energy receptive additive is present in an amount between 5 and 15 weight percent of said binder fiber.

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14. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said binder fiber is a bicomponent fiber selected from the type consisting of sheath/core and island in the sea.
15. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said binder fiber is a sheath/core bicomponent fiber and said additive is present in said sheath.
16. (Original) The structure of claim 7 wherein said binder fiber is a sheath/core bicomponent fiber and said additive is present in said core.
17. (Original) The structure of claim 4 wherein said superabsorbent, natural fibers and binder fibers are homogeneously mixed.
18. (Original) The structure of claim 4 wherein said superabsorbent, natural fibers and binder fibers are heterogeneously mixed.
19. (Original) The structure of claim 18 wherein said binder fibers vary in concentration in an X-Y plane.
20. (Original) The structure of claim 18 wherein said binder fibers vary in concentration in a Z direction.
21. (Original) The structure of claim 4 having a density, wherein said density varies in an X - Y plane.
22. (Original) The structure of claim 4 having a density, wherein said density varies in a Z - direction.
23. (Original) The structure of claim 4 having a thickness, wherein said thickness varies in an X - Y plane.
24. (Original) A nonwoven structure comprising superabsorbent, pulp, and binder fiber, said binder fiber having energy receptive additive in an amount between 5 and 15 weight percent and having a dielectric loss of at least 0.5, wherein said structure has been subjected to microwave radiation to activate said binder fiber and bond said structure.